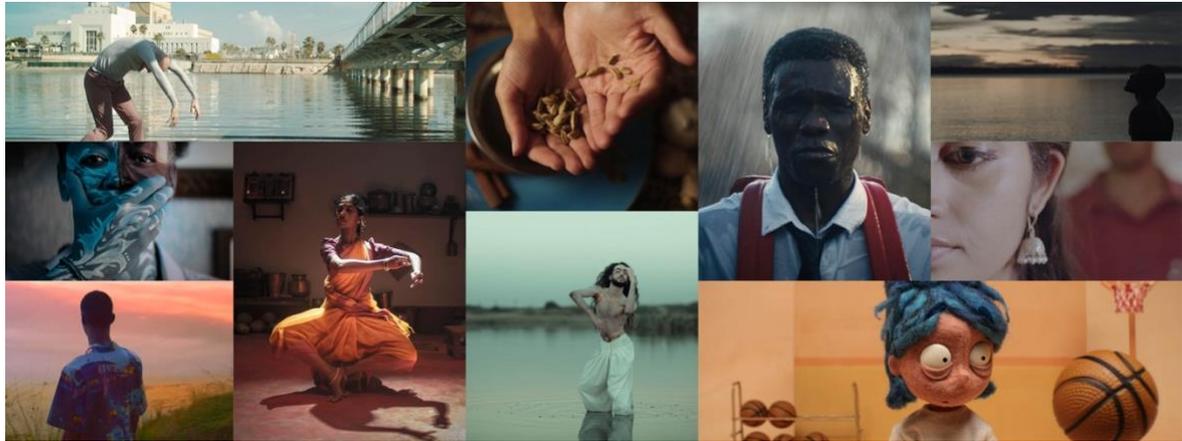


ASFF 2021 PREVIEW: PROGRAMMES ON IDENTITY & BELONGING



How do we decide who we are, or perhaps, who we want to be? *Mirror, Mirror* is the fifth strand of films at ASFF 2021, posing questions to identity and belonging.

Identity is a complex, multi-faceted and fluid concept. It makes up who we are as individuals. Arguably, our memories, experiences and values are more important than where we are from. However, the way we see ourselves is often very different to the way other people see us. Through 10 reels and one feature, spanning a multitude of genres, Strand 5, *Mirror, Mirror*, considers the intricacies of selfhood in the 21st century.

In *Collective Power*, this series of twelve engaging films considers the role that fashion plays in identity. Showcasing shorts from Spain, Italy, China, Germany, Japan and the UK, this programme is a call for liberation from preconceived notions and calls you into action, to be aware of your subconscious, asking you to pay attention in a world where this is challenging. Among them, *Burberry – Inner Life* sees actress Teresa Li explore how the characters she plays intertwine with her own individuality, whilst Namatanje Zimba's *Me, Myself and My Hair* challenges notions of black beauty.

Those looking for some drama in their lives can find it across two reels. In *Brand New Me*, this collection looks at the things that shape our lives – some big, some small – when decisions are actively taken or when fate makes its own choice. *Into the Unknown*, meanwhile, is a series of six films that journey through freedom and fantasy. From *My Own*, as a nonbinary person struggles to find a place for gender fluidity in the world of ballet, to the Sundanese drama *Al-Sit*, as a 15-year-old girl faces an arranged marriage, characters find poetry in the human existence.

Tom Young's feature-length *Ribblehead* is also showcased. Starring Gareth Bennet-Ryan, he plays a formerly successful writer struggling to pen his second book when a visit to a local landmark unlocks his creative potential but draws him into a dangerous world.

Mirror, Mirror is also a strand that embraces alternative forms of expression. *Confronting Ourselves* sees artists using poetry, performance, photography, and other forms to explore the question of identity. *Fragmented Memories* is an experimental reel that reflect on memories and connections, weaving together past, present, and future narratives. *Blast* brings dance-themes shorts together from Russia, Brazil, Germany, and the UK to explore how we exist as individuals within communities, interacting, creating, and protesting.



In venue, strands will be screened across a variety of days, whilst, virtually, strands will be released daily and accrue throughout the course of the live festival week. The 2021 Aesthetica Short Film Festival runs in-person from 2-7 November and online from 2-30 November. Tickets start from £25. asff.co.uk/tickets



Notes for Editors:

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- **About the Festival:** The Aesthetica Short Film Festival is one of the UK's leading film events founded in 2010. It is a unique gathering point for filmmakers, industry delegates and audiences. This year, ASFF marks its 11th edition with an extended six-day festival, that runs in-person, online and hybrid, in York from 2-7 November, and virtually 2-30 November.
- **The Film Programme:** This year's festival features over 300 works across short and feature film, virtual reality and immersive experiences. ASFF presents an extensive programme, with works participating from around the world. This year's Official selection is organised into six strands, titled *How it Was*, *How it is*, *How it Will be*; *Humanity on the Edge*; *When Life Gives You Lemons, Make Lemonade*; *Pleased to Meet You*; *Mirror, Mirror*; and *Nobody's Free Until Everybody's Free*.
- **Guest Programmes:** This year's Guest Programmes span vast distances, with focuses including South Africa, Indonesia, Iraq, Afghanistan and China, from T A P E's centring of female filmmakers of Islamic heritage, to We Are Parable's celebrations of Black filmmaking. Docs Ireland demonstrates how a divided past continues to shape Northern Irish culture, whilst Directors Notes offers a provocative take on identity politics, and ASFF screens a three-part programme commemorating 9/11.
- **New Wave:** ASFF is the only festival in the UK that offers a dedicated strand celebrating graduate filmmakers. This is your chance to see work by fresh talent and to meet the visionaries who will shape the future of film.
- **Live Industry Events:** Every year, we welcome industry leaders from a range of disciplines to speak about their craft. This year, we welcome acclaimed editors, directors and actors such as **Sally Potter**, **Nicolas Chaudeurge**, **Maxine Peake**, **Gamba Cole** and **Francis Lee** as well as leading practitioners across more than 50 masterclasses.
- **Industry Marketplace:** Returning to ASFF for the third year, the Industry Marketplace finds a new home in both a live and virtual space, welcoming more than 40 exhibitors from leading exhibitors, including production services, film festivals, screen agencies and renowned universities. A unique platform in the UK, the Industry Marketplace offers a vital platform for practitioners to make connections and uncover opportunities. asff.co.uk/industry-marketplace.
- **Tickets, Events & Passes:** In-Person, Hybrid and Virtual Passes are available. Prices start from £25 and cover an entire household if attending virtually. To book your ticket, visit asff.co.uk/tickets.
- **Press Credentials:** ASFF offers journalists an unparalleled opportunity to immerse in a cinematic playground for the duration of the festival, taking advantage of our both live and on demand events. To register [email: kate@aestheticamagazine.com](mailto:kate@aestheticamagazine.com).
- **The Aesthetica Short Film Festival is produced by Aesthetica Magazine**, one of the UK's leading publications for contemporary art and culture. aestheticamagazine.com.
- **Connect with ASFF on social:** [Twitter @asffest](https://twitter.com/asffest) | [Facebook @aestheticashortfilmfest](https://facebook.com/aestheticashortfilmfest) | [Instagram @asffestival](https://instagram.com/asffestival)

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